

Maoists torch vehicles engaged in road construction in Odisha

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Koraput: A group of around 30 armed Maoists today torched at least two vehicles and a machine used in road work in a bid to disrupt construction process here, police said today.

The Maoists swooped down at Tolo Ganjeipadar village, about 70 km from here, under Pottangi police limits on Thursday midnight and set the vehicles on fire, they said.

"The Maoists reached the camp of the contractor where the labourers were sleeping and first asked them to leave the area at the earliest. Later, the group of Maoists set fire to a JCB machine, a tractor and a mixture machine engaged in the road work," they said.

"The Maoists have also damaged around 15 other equipment used for the road construction work before leaving the spot," the source added. From the crime spot, the police recovered two Maoist letters in which the rebels have warned not to continue the road work in the area.

"Adivasi's will not be benefited by the road. Stop the road work immediately. If the contractor dares to deviate from our diktat then he will be punished," the Maoist letter reads.

Police investigation has been initiated and combing operation has been launched in the area.

"Srikakulam-Koraput division of CPI (Maoist) is behind the offensive. Preliminary investigation show that earlier the Maoists had never opposed the road work," SDPO (Sunabeda) Ashok Pattnaik said.